



2004 Robert Craig Durell Vineyard ~ Sonoma Valley Chardonnay

Total Production: 272 cases

Winemaker Notes

The 2004 harvest gave us just enough perfect grapes to make 275 cases of this exceptional Chardonnay from the acclaimed Durell Vineyard in Sonoma Valley. This vintage shows a European flair, balancing the brilliant fruit with an underlying mineral character and clean, crisp acidity that enhances fine cuisine. Winemaker Chad Alexander lets the vineyard's *terroir* shine through, allowing full enjoyment of what nature intended. This year, stainless steel fermentation was used for one-third of the wine to emphasize the purity and clarity of the grapes' inherent character. The remaining lots were barrel fermented in French oak. Extended lees contact during fermentation added layers of richness and complexity.

Vineyard Characteristics

The Durell Vineyard borders the Carneros District to the south in an area renowned for great Chardonnays. The cool, breezy climate is heavily influenced by San Pablo Bay. Throughout the vineyard, shallow sandstone is permeated with rocks and fossils, stressing the vines as the roots search for nutrients. The sparse soils and the cool climate produce ideal growing conditions for slowly ripening fruit; small, flavor-packed berries; and very small yields. For additional quality control, any fruit that does not ripen evenly is culled, ensuring exceptional Chardonnay grapes.

Tasting Notes

Aroma: Luscious pear and white nectarine with spice and mineral notes.
Flavors: Layers of pear and white nectarine, leading into a lively mineral component. *Finish:* Bright, flowery finish with a touch of cream; the balance of fruit and acid lengthens, leaving the palate refreshed and wanting more.
General: A refined and distinctive Durell offering that grows in complexity in the glass.

Wine Information

Winemaker: Chad Alexander

Harvest date: September 22-Oct. 7

Average sugar: 25.5° Brix

TA: .68

pH: 3.52

Alcohol: 14.8%

Fermentation: 68% in French oak - 60% new and 40% one-year; 32% in stainless steel

Bottling Date: July 2005

Price: California suggested retail price is \$38 per bottle.

Release Date: April 2006